

An Office Action was mailed on October 20, 2005. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 - 21 are currently pending in this application. Applicants amend claims 1, 3 - 6, 9, 10 and 12 - 17. No new matter is added. Support for the amendments may be found, for example, in Applicants' specification at page 22, lines 20 - 24.

Claims 1 - 21 are rejected under the second paragraph of 35 USC § 112 as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner finds that the claims recite desired physical characteristics of an end product without reciting an associated structure. Applicants amend claims 1, 3 - 6, 9, 10 and 12 - 17 to address informalities and to further clarify the claimed subject matter, and respectfully traverse these rejections.

1. An interlabial pad comprising:
 an absorbent body for absorbing liquid, the absorbent body including a fiber aggregate of fibers; and
 a cover body for covering the absorbent body in an enclosing manner; wherein the fibers are oriented randomly;
 wherein the absorbent body has a flexural rigidity as Gurley bending resistance in a range from 25mg to 130mg; and
 wherein a ratio of flexural rigidities between the longitudinal or the lateral direction and the thickness direction of the absorbent body is in a range from 0.5 to 2.0.

In the interlabial pad of amended independent claim 1, an absorbent body of the interlabial pad is characterized as having "a flexural rigidity as Gurley bending resistance in a range

from 25mg to 130mg;" and "a ratio of flexural rigidities between the longitudinal or the lateral direction and the thickness direction of the absorbent body [that] is in a range from 0.5 to 2.0". This result is achieved, as claimed in amended independent claim 1, by an absorbent body that includes a "fiber aggregate of fibers," in which the fibers are "oriented randomly."

In amended dependent 4, Applicants claim:

4. The interlabial pad according to Claim 3;
wherein the fiber aggregate positioned at the vestibular floor side is formed by layering solitary or mixed fibers selected from the group consisting of rayon, acetate, natural cotton, super absorbent polymer fibers and synthetic fibers, and has a tensile elongation of 60% or more than that in a dry state even in a wet state in which liquids are absorbed.

In the interlabial pad of amended dependent claim 4, the fiber aggregate is further characterized as having "tensile elongation of 60% or more than that in a dry state even in a wet state in which liquids are absorbed." This result is achieved, as claimed in amended dependent claim 4, by a fiber aggregate "formed by layering solitary or mixed fibers selected from the group consisting of rayon, acetate, natural cotton, super absorbent polymer fibers and synthetic fibers". This arrangement is also specified for claims 10 and 15 - 17.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed arrangements for amended independent claim 1 and dependent claims 4, 10 and 15 - 17 do specify structures for the absorbent body and the fiber aggregate, respectively, that are both limiting and provide a basis by which one skilled in the art may construct and use the claimed invention to achieve the intended results.

Claims 2, 3, 5-9, directly or indirectly from one or more of claims 1, 4, 10 and 15-17. As a result, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 - 21 as amended are not indefinite for failing to set forth a claimed structure for achieving the claimed results, and are therefore in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, in view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance as to all pending claims be issued in this case.

If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 
Thomas J. Bean

Registration No.: 44,528
DARBY & DARBY P.C.
P.O. Box 5257
New York, New York 10150-5257
(212) 527-7700
(212) 527-7701 (Fax)
Attorneys/Agents For Applicant